

TECHNOLOGY 1421

Chapter 1421 - A Dangerous Target

Ears perked to the sky, eyes subconsciously peered too widely; everyone was focused on this Platinum mission.

That is... How dangerous would it be?

The tension was high, with some subconsciously thinking of those who would be headed out for this final mission.

Such people would definitely be the strongest in the hall, bold, daring, and maybe more awe-striking than they envisioned.

Like so, many people quickly left their imaginations to run wild while listening to General Sulian.

"Platform Taskers! The mission tank alone should tell you the immediate urgency and dangers surrounding your tasks!" Sulian stated while giving a hard sweeping look to the crowd.

Of course, they know!

Everyone knew just how deadly this tank was!

"Your task is to gather intel and find all hidden and public bases, fortresses, pleasure homes and properties, training estates, and properties belonging to your target.

For now, all of you are forbidden to monitor the target's movements. It's speculated that the target has some unique ability. And for all we know, this skill might be able to spit you all out. So stick to your primary goal

Because of how strong and dangerous the target and his men are, your mission is far more difficult than it looks like on the surface!...

Target Locations: Lingingburg, Veinitta and Dafaren, Veinitta!"

Sulian's words resounded in the hall

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Gather intel?

Many looked at one another, wondering how tough the target and his men in question were for the mission to be ranked as Platinum.

Of course, they didn't count the mission rank evaluation, feeling that there should be something tricky or special about the case.

It can also be shown that the security within these places would be terribly tight.

And now, entering with no Baymardian technology to assist them, they would have to rely on their instincts and skills.

No night vision glasses, nothing to alert them of assassins various feet away.

For all they know, while swooping in from a distance, they could be shot and killed, making it the end of them.

But of course, as special forces assigned to these tasks, their skill level was unquestionably sharp.

Spotting assassins should be a simple feat for them, especially when they too knew advanced assassin moves, blending like one in nature.

They were almost trained as Baymardian Assassins, having the perfect combo of Baymardian techniques, ancient assassin skills, and various ones developed by his majesty himself.

Additionally, it should be noted that most of them headed out were Shaolins.

To become one in nature was a walk in the park for them.

But just because they were skilled didn't mean that they shouldn't be careful.

Why?

Because though not as powerful as Morgany or those from Lampe, Veinitta wasn't too far back in their strength, technique, and power.

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Again, from Landon's personal experience, when in Dafaren, he was quick to recognize how superior their weapons were.

Brutal!

Though people had special blacksmith formulas and other secrets to compact and make their weapons devastatingly frightening.

They could even make a weapon that looked similar to the Modao Saber.

The combo of spear and longsword was very eye-catching.

And its weight alone couldn't be handled by Pyno's men.

Many people in Pyno wouldn't be able to swing it correctly since it should be 4 times heavier than an ordinary weapon.

But did you see those in Veinitta?

They were carrying and using their weapons about as though holding feathers.

Once again, Landon would like to draw similarities from Goku in Dragon ball, who were weights all day long, even when fighting.

In the end, didn't this show that those Veitts had managed to train and build their strength to a far superior level than those in Pyno?

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Such weapons not being in Pyno showed that those here didn't know how to forge them.

The forging method should be a secret formula.

And even back on earth, some cold forging techniques had long been lost with history.

Historians did have the actual swords from people of the past.

But for the life of them, no matter how much they tried to recreate some of these swords and sabers, they just couldn't do it!

These were some of the mysteries that the ancients took with them.

And for good reasons.

After all, in medieval times, Forging techniques were a nation's secret. And anyone caught giving out such information would be put to death, no questions asked.

The blacksmiths who knew these techniques were all housed by the nobles in various camps.

Common blacksmiths couldn't know this.

And what made Landon shudder a bit was how much they affected the Modao Saber.

Back on earth, it was recorded that General Li Siye from the Tang Dynasty had sliced both a rider and its horse in one full swing.

That is, there was almost no resistance when the blade touched its opponent.

It cut through them like butter.

Both the heads of the rider and his horse fell to the ground like nothing!

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Bottom line, the Veitts had stronger raw power, stronger techniques, stronger weapons, stronger horses, and even stronger security.

Don't look at his earlier situation back when he reached Tilda.

The only reason they were able to get things rolling so smoothly was that, for one, it was a fast operation. Go in, go out.

Secondly, they had the help of advanced weaponry and gadgets to launch surprise and confusing attacks.

But now, the battlefield has changed.

Those going for the Platinum mission would be all alone with no advanced technology, only surviving in similar manners that others in this world did.

And what's more, they would be going onto deadly territories.

In there, they could get poisoned, stabbed, shot by archers, head-sliced, tortured without end, or even sold into slavery to another distant location where they, the Baymardians, might not be able to find or reach.

And finally, if they ever got surrounded, it might also result in a fight to the death!

Platinum rank.

Tsk...

The dangers involved were unfathomable!

Chapter 1422 Briefing Over

F***!

The more people listened to Sulian's brief warnings, the more uneasy they felt for those going out.

How did these people's target also have special powers?

Having extraordinary power wasn't mind-blowing to many anymore.

After all, in their barracks, prison systems, and various departments across Baymard, didn't they see quite a few with super strength?

One shouldn't forget the Monarch do Terique, Astar, who also had super strength and a bottomless pit for a belly.

And then there was Lucia with her visions, Queen Penelope with her scary flexibility, William with his speed, and the others who had their own unique quirks too.

Again, what about the prisoner that could control metal? Though not strong, it was still something.

They've seen it so much that now, they felt that nothing could surprise them again.

Their only worry was with this target.

That is, what exactly could he do? And in what capacity?

Many were focused on that aspect, while Landon was focused on another.

Blending.

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And as planned, those going out on their mission would only take tools that regular Veitt hunters would use.

The last time they rescued Tilda, they were able to find out this much.

And Landon had to admit that even the hunters of Veinitta had better standard hunting gears than those here.

Thus, with the knowledge they gathered, they could recreate typical Veitt attires, shoes, daggers, knives, ropes, and all the rest!

Again... They also had to have the in-style pleasant hairdos popular by the Veitt locals, not looking too out of place.

Blend, blend... They had to blend!

And as for how they planned to send these people in, of course it would be by air!

Summer was just around the corner, making it perfect for a drop-in!

And just in case any might have forgotten, Veitt ships were different from those in Pyno. Entering by sea would only make people notice them more!

Landon massaged his elbows, thinking deeply about the exchange method they had devised.

That is, just as they did with other intel-gathering missions after some time has passed, they would send a few people to particular spots into both Lingingburg and Dafaren, getting them to check on those out here as well as collect the intel they targeted so far.

And for this to work, they would still drop in by it in secluded areas after scanning the place for any persons.

Of course, they would use their heat and night vision devices, checking the scene before descent.

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A lot of thought went into this.

And those doing these tasks can at most stay 3 days in these various spots.

These spots would probably be the same decade they initially dropped the primary team through.

So every 3 or 4 weeks, those gathering intel would sneak out of the cities, towns, or villages they found themselves in, making their way to these spots.

Of course, doing this won't make them look suspicious since it was customary for ordinary folk to camp out when it was too late.

You have to know that the cities and towns closed their gates at particular times.

What if, when traveling for weeks, one reaches their destination too late at night?

Again, they might've been delayed by fleeing from bandits or other unfortunate incidents.

In that case, sleeping out until morning would be their only option.

The forests were too dangerous, with all sorts of giant creatures waiting to swallow quite a few of them alive.

That's why many slept around the perimeters of the forest since everyone knows that the deeper one went, the more likely they were to run into the many nightly beasts.

Again, the perimeters were safer since most beasts didn't venture around such open sites.

It can be said that their worries would be from meeting thugs, thieves, crazed killers, and slave sellers.

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All in all, those sneaking out could aim to be late, missing the nightly deadline before the gates got shut.

Of course, apart from acting like hunters, some might even have to sign up as workers within the target's public homes.

Such a busy and influential person should always be on the move, traveling months and months from location to location, sometimes also staying in his secret fortresses.

Who knows... Maybe these public ones weren't used quite often by him.

And with his absence, those who go onto his mansion to gather the latest gossip and maybe one day snoop around successfully.

For sure, peasants having a position in the mansion would be tricky unless they were slaves.

So maybe, they would have to do contract jobs linking them to the mansion.

Like getting hired by famous tailors into special workshops, working hard, and becoming outstanding.

For sure, the women in high society would no doubt request for such tailors.

And visiting the estate would be a plus.

Or they could work under some merchants, coming in to supply goods into the mansion.

In the end... they could still be directly hired into the mansion as assistant cooks or something else.

Sigh...

Before leaving, he would like them to initially choose what they wanted to do, practice, and learn the trait here before leaving in summer.

At the same time, they also get to work in taverns, merchant sites, stores, or be simple farmers and hunters.

Bottom line, they had to research and perfect not just their 'Veitt jobs' if they wanted to be favored, giving access to bigger news.

And as a new, they would all have to make themselves look average or ugly. Fat or just not attractive.

Who knows what enmity they might bring to themselves because of their looks?

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Landon shook his head wryly.

According to the system, Their target, Lord Castello Basanta, had various properties scattered in both Veitt Empires

?Dafaren: 14 hidden bases, 25 pleasure homes, 11 public estates scattered around, and 20 public money lending temples/establishments.

?Lingingburg: 11 hidden bases, 19 pleasure homes, 17 public estates, and 18 money lending temples.

For now, all he wanted to know were the locations.

And then, it would be time to move.

"Alright! That is all!"

Briefing over!

Chapter 1423 A Blessed Child

And just like that, the ball was rolling back in Baymard.

Not too long from now, Landon and Lucy would be on their way out of there.

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--The Capital City, Empire of Titarian, Zohl.--

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Thup!

An arrow shot through the bushes, making its mark on the head of a 5-foot horned green boar.

~Clap. Clap. Clap.

"Your highness, excellent performance!"

"Wonderful, your highness! You've grown quite a lot since last."

"Excellent!"

"Wonderful!"

~Clap. Clap. Clap.~

The thunderous claps from the spectators were loud but sincere.

This was his highness Gregory Ghoul the 3rd.

He was their future monarch, someone while they, as supporters, stood beside fervently.

At first, not many of them approved of him.

After all, growing up, his highness was too soft-natured and a pure one at that too.

When you look into his eyes, you could see the innocence of a newly born baby in them.

He was just too clean for people like themselves in these warring times.

That's why when he was younger, he adamantly refused to allow him to take over.

But Gregory's now late father had sent him to many of their camps, wanting them to give the boy a chance and train him in various aspects, be it archery, knowledge, writing, and even simple tasks like treating one's injuries.

That's right.

Growing up, Gregory didn't have the standard teacher training methods.

No teacher came to the palace to see him.

Instead, for the first time in history, the leading nobles, generals, and many others were the ones who taught him first hand.

And then, they realized that though the boy was innocent, he was very smart, like a sponge, soaking up everything they taught.

Hell!

Who would be won't such a prized student?

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Gregory never attended the knighthood academies.

Yes.

Only followed the select few who were tasked with being his teachers.

And make no mistake.

Though those who taught him were few in number, they were all at the topmost parts of the pyramid political powers in the empire.

Meaning if one of them supported him, then the entire fraction of nobles under that one person would also support him.

This was his late father's long-lasting plan.

And growing up to the age of 17, it worked perfectly.

He had amassed quite a lot of supporters.

And in the process, he had also managed to curb their greed.

It was shocking to see that this young man had softened quite a few of them at heart, making them question their earlier actions.

If it were before, many of them would be the ones seeking trouble, trying to crush others and scheme even when they needn't do it.

But now, their motto was: They wouldn't look for trouble anymore. However, if trouble came their way, they would repay it triple!

All they could do was protect and defend themselves while also gathering intel about their enemies.

Only if things got too bad would they make a striking move!

It can be seen that his highest Ghouls had changed them, while they in turn also changed his highness as well.

Though the boy retained his innocence, the drive for his people, his motivation, and several other aspects had given them hope for a new era in Titarian.

Some even began seeking him as a blessed child sent from the heavens.

Most of the nobles were by his side, as well as almost all peasants too.

Never in their history had they had such a future monarch loved by all.

Of course, these were medieval times, and for everyone, what they considered a good monarch was someone with a sense of measure.

No one was perfect.

They expected every monarch to have flaws and maybe even get greedy. But there should be a limit to one's greed and level of tyranny.

Provided one didn't go too far, they would consider that person a good Monarch.

But in Gregory's case, they already considered him a Great Heavenly Monarch once his coronation took place.

That was how great his image was within the empire. And one shouldn't even talk about how his heavenly powers bestowed on him.

For sure, they expected great things from this future monarch of theirs.

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"Bravo. Bravo, your highness, you did well."

"Really?"

Gregory looked at his uncles very excitedly.

This was the famous Green horned boar!

Its outer flesh was so hard that one couldn't kill it with a few sword slashes.

No... One needs to send 20 to 30 slashes on the same spot if you want to cut through its outer skin.

However, its only weakness is the soft spot between its eyebrows.

For 2 weeks now, Gregory had been trying to take down at least one to pass a final test.

Make no mistake. These boars grew up to 10 feet tall. And when they went on a stampede rampage, they could even destroy countless thatched times and kill people in the process too.

They were dangerous and very vicious when provoked.

And as tradition, before his coronation, he was to take down at least one of these boars by himself with no assistance from others.

The boar's skin would then be processed and used as part of his coronation attire later on.

Of course, he was not allowed to take down a boar considered to be the age of children if he wanted to pass the trial.

And as one can imagine, the task had given him hell!

He was almost run over, killed, and even stabbed by its thick horns.

But finally, all his hard work paid off.

He finally killed a stray Boar that went too far off its pack.

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The group of people who had arrived after receiving the signal from the hidden invigilators all rushed over and pridefully, seeing their student take down the boar in just 2 weeks.

"Well done, your highness Gregory. In your father's time, he used an entire month and a half out in the world before succeeding.

But you... You've done above and beyond his records!.. The late Monarch would be proud!"

Gregory's eyes turned red.

It's only been 2 months since his father passed away.

The pain was still fresh.

'Father, I will make you proud!'

Chapter 1424 Barking Dog, Cletus Ghoul

Gregory clenched his fists in determination.

Before his father passed, he told him about a few aspirations he wished Gregory could fulfill during his reign.

['Gregory, my boy... Though many say I am a good ruler, I know I am not. I was very greedy when I started, hoarding my riches while letting others suffer.

On the surface, I looked kind, but behind closed doors, I was indeed vicious. But maybe because I've touched me, I began to change ever since you came into my life.

From only seeing you as a blood relative to loving you... This old man has changed since then.

And now, waiting for death's call, I realized how wrong I was. Gregory... You must never become like my past self.

Protect our people and lead them to a better tomorrow.]

Gregory's eyes were red.

His father died strangely, suddenly growing weaker and weaker by the day, until he finally passed away.

The 17-year-old Gregory felt he wasn't ready for the throne.

But recalling his father's words, he decided to take a bold leap into his future.

One of his cabinet ministers with a long white and black beard calmly stepped forward and patted his shoulders.

"Sigh... Your highness Gregory, let us do our best not to dwell too deeply into the past. Your father will not be happy seeing you this sad."

Gregory lifted his red eyes, flashing a warm smile to everyone.

"Right, uncles... Yes! It's a happy occasion, so let's be happy! I finally caught the boar!"

"Hmm... You did it. Congratulations, your highness."

"Congratulations, your highness. As expected of my student."

"Pui!~~... Why are you so shameless as to take credit now? That's obviously my water step he was using."

"What a joke! What is the water-step when compared to my fire arrow skill?"

(*π*)

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Gregory looked at the group and chuckled merrily.

Well, he wasn't alone, even without his father being by his side.

~Gallop. Gallop.~

Barly!

In the distance, he could see one of his guards rapidly advancing with his beloved Barly.

The horse was so happy, seeing its owner.

The long-bearded minister hopped on his own horse, looking at Gregory with undisguised satisfaction.

"Your highness, since your trial was a success, it's best we head back into the City. The boar will be transported by others very shortly."

At night, the nightly beasts would begin to move.

In particular, he was talking about the Night Mantis that only moved at night around these parts.

Of course, meeting one or 2 was nothing.

But meeting a whole gathering of wandering mantis would be very disastrous!

Looking at the setting sun, they knew they had limited time to head towards the forest's perimeters.

~Gallop. Gallop. Gallop.~

They were off, riding hastily amidst the hilly terrain.

Up, down, up, down.

They were first in a forest region, then soon arrived in a rocky one, followed by a mushy one, a sandy desert, another forest one, and so on.

Each terrain housed unique creatures.

But believe it or not, all this was still considered the innermost forest terrain.

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Up, down, up, down... they moved vigilantly.

"Your highness, your coronation is in late July. For the time being, you must perfect and perform the various rituals in accordance with our culture. Fret not. We will be here to prepare and guide you step by step."

Gregory nodded. "Thank you, uncles. I, your proud pupil, am ready to learn!"

"Hahahahaha~" Another man laughed. "Great! Great! We shall begin the rituals 2 days from now!"

"Yes! The earlier we begin, the better for his highest Gregory!"

Gregory listened to his uncles, subconsciously agreeing with them.

But soon, he frowned.

"Uncles... Do you think my letter to Uncle Cletus will get to him?"

This...

The men all looked at one another tactfully.

Cletus Ghoul!

That man had always been a thorn in their flesh!

What? Do you think they didn't know how he tried to assassinate his highness on multiple occasions? If not for his highness's strange blessings, wouldn't he have died a long time ago?

They sneered, thinking of their counterattack with the bastard.

It should be noted that when the late Monarch passed, they secretly controlled the news.

At present, it was only announced a month ago that the monarch was dead.

However, he had long died 2 months ago with only them knowing.

Even the monarch himself wanted it to be so.

And to preserve his body, they gathered the snowy remains of winter, freezing his body down to the more.

And even after the announcement was made, they still applied paint and did several other tasks to make his appearance look fresh for the opposition to see.

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The men all looked at themselves thoughtfully.

Even if the news went out as fast as it could, it should be arriving at Cletus' side a few weeks from now in mid-June or late June.

In that case, how would it be possible for him to make it back to the Capital on time?

Impossible!

Even if he grew wings, such a thing would never happen!

From their many spies scattered around, they knew exactly where Cletus was.

So calculating and estimating things, it would be magical for Cletus to appear here during the coronation.

F***!

They didn't want him here at all!

And even the late Monarch had agreed to this.

That guy's ambition was too great.

But luckily, they were smarter, making a swift move before Cletus could react.

And now, even if he came to the Capital later on... Wouldn't the boy already be crowned?

Of course, they would also stay vigilant, especially against the opposition here.

No...

It can be said that if they handled the opposition, then even if Cletus came back and tried to rally support, he would be met with a dead-end!

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The long-bearded man dawned a calm face.

"Your highness, let us forget about your uncle now and focus on your corporation... For now, it's best we keep him out of the picture, completely!"

What harm could a barking dog far away do without the opposition's support?

Chapter 1425 A Strange World

The turbulence across the world was as rocky as it ever was.

But back in Baymard, many had their own joys, worries, sorrows, and thrills too.

And sitting in a small cart, similar to golf one, was a man a little over the age of 35, smiling merrily while proceeding on their way.

He was driving within the Coastal Region, from the public Coastal Port to another distant location across the district.

Ah yes!...

It was already the first week of June!

And as everyone knows, the third week of June was always the official beginning of Summer!

As of now, summer has yet to come. However, the Spring rains had lessened quite a lot, revealing the sun's hot rays.

During Spring, the sun would come up once in a while; its feel wasn't hot but cool and slightly warm.

Maybe it was the rains washing the leftover snowy residues, or perhaps it was just the coolness of the rains.

All in all, the heat was hardly coming from the sun's rays.

And now, with the area fully green, clear, and bright, an unknown was quick to engulf the land.

Before, they still wore sweaters while out and about.

But at the start of the week, the sudden sun showers were so great that many thought summer was already here.

The weather forecast estimated that it wouldn't rain till Wednesday next week.

Hahahahahaha~

Sunny, sunny, sunny.

This was typically the best and most exciting time of the year!

"Good morning, Dock Manager Levi!"

"Hey, Manager Levi! Were you able to fix that tooth injury of yours? Honestly, how can a full-grown man like yourself still try to crack so many Iron nuts with your teeth?"

"Hahahahha~... Manager Levi, good seeing you, man! How's the family?"

(^_^)

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One by one, many saluted Manager Levi while also doing their various tasks.

Some were transporting crates of goods using the heavy drivable machines, while others were tasked with cleaning the open harbor.

In short, there were too many takes that many did all around him.

In general, many who haven't spent time in the region might be confused by the many terminologies here.

The Docks are the landings in a harbor where ships are loaded and unloaded or repaired.

In short, it is the built sections along the coastlines that stretch further into the ocean where the ships and other water vessels are parked or stored.

But the harbor is the open and restricted space of water where the ships are actually sitting and floating on while parked.

And as for the Port... Many who listen to the conversation between the staff here might be very confused, wondering if they were talking about the actual Coastal Port.

No... The Coast port building was the official place like a seaport or airport where people and merchandise could officially enter or leave a country.

But for them, the workers, this entire District was a port.

Yes! This was District I.

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Its entire existence was one vast commercial facility equipped with cranes, forklifts, warehouses, docks, port offices, security buildings, and so much more.

It can be said that this region had no less than 200 different buildings already spread across the vast district, all in charge of taking care of port matters.

And of course, all warehouses and various important buildings were housed like distressed, with layers of gates, securities, and many other measures put in place.

What a joke!

Do you think they would be comfortable places all these items out here without some form of security?

If one could recall, a little over 4 years ago, Landon had requested for the entire Coastal region to be walled by towering electric fences.

It was simple.

And before one reached the fence, the many guards would've spotted them.

Landon didn't want to destroy the aesthetics of the port.

That's why between the actual waters and the fence were several miles of open space.

Just like the open space in front of towering walls of King's landing, he also created a mole space here.

And to be accurate, the space here was 3 times bigger than the space before King's Landing.

Not only was this a good battlespace, but it also kept the scene looking very neat, not choked up, and very beautiful too.

Again, not all buildings in the District were behind the fence.

Security buildings and docking management buildings, some staff eateries, cleaning buildings, some cafes, and inventory and delivery buildings were fully set across the scene.

Except for the towering Coast guard watchtowers, most buildings within this unfenced territory were made short in height so everyone could still enjoy the beautiful scenery across the district.

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~Drrrumm~

Levi looked to his far left, seeing several trucks drive out of the fenced territory.

They had the dishing logo on them.

No doubt about it, they were probably moving back and forth between the Fishing dock and the Fishing Industry, transporting all fish captured.

Levi had a slight smile on his face, thinking of how much growth the District had undergone.

Scratching his head, he looked at the new map issued out, heading towards IE-78.

This was a new Government Docking sight that had just been newly built.

It was a new offloading and loading site for the empire's imports and exports.

Typically, foreign representatives, merchants, and the rest would have meetings on such sites.

Thinking of why he was heading over, Levi looked at his watch, feeling more and more anxious with every passing second.

'Dammit! I can't be late!'

1, 5, 15, 23 minutes...

He had spent 23 minutes across the bustling District until he was finally able to locate the newly established Site.

Good.

He hastily parked his cart, calmly running his hands through his hair and adjusting his outfit.

Today, they would be meeting a few representatives from 2 new Treaty signed Romain Empires.

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"Ah~~ Manager Levi, just the person I wanted to see. I just got a call that the cruise ship carrying the representatives had docked 30 minutes ago. So soon, they should be here. So... I trust you're fully prepared, right?"

Levi nodded: "Yes, Minister Rowin. We should have no problem from my end."

"Wonderful!"

Like so, he, minister Rowin and a few others went into the lounge to pass the time by.

And before they knew it, their guests had arrived... All dark-skinned in complexion.

Levi immediately got busy.

Tick-Tick. Tick-Tock.

Time flew by fast.

Flip.~

He calmly turned his page, speaking in Roma.

"The goods arrived a week ago via cargo ship and have been properly accounted for."

He was in charge of the warehouse that kept the goods Baymard imported from these people.

And sometimes, rather than burning the goods, Baymard would choose to do an exchange. These foreigners wanted an equivalent exchange of various basic needs like mattresses, beddings, and so on.

Working here in the port district, it was all about import, export, exchange, tourist matters, fishing, exploration, etc.

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~Phew.

Levi wiped the sweat from his forehead, drinking several glasses of water in one gulp.

Maybe he didn't show it, but in there, he was still nervous.

No matter how many times he did such tasks, meeting new people while on state or other important businesses was always a bit scary.

But luckily, the meeting had gone without a hitch.

But was his day over?

Far from it!

With his trusty cart, he drove into the fenced region, reader straight for the warehouse he managed.

Today, various other shipments from afar have arrived.

His days were always like this.

After many security checks, he finally entered the warehouse zone.

Now, he was fully suited up with all safety gear necessary when on site.

One by one, he watched those in the drivable machines transport the goods into his warehouse.

And as expected, there were more bizarre things around.

"Manager Levi, what are the storing conditions of this item? It says on the box that if we want to store this item for longer periods, we have to open it up and store it underwater... But how is that even possible? It's not food or plants in there. So what sort of requirements are these? Could it be that they got it wrong?"

"Manager Levi... Something strange just happened. When 3 of those crates with those strange stones fell, they all came together, gluing to themselves. And now we can't separate them at all!"

"Manager Levi, this crate is moving on its own as though something is in it... Should we open it up?"

(?^?)

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Second by second, hour by hour, Levi was continuously met with such strange phenomenons.

However, this was the best part of his job.

With a broad smile on his face, he began checking the storage instructions for each item, making sure that for as long as they stayed here, they would be adequately stored.

The world was filled with bizarre items from mother nature.

And every day, his job felt like an adventure.

What would he get next?

Over the years, his love for his family, job, and his empire grew immensely.

Levi tapped the crate before him, assisting a few to mark it up.

[Museum.]

The future was bright.

"Alright. Everyone, take their last 15-minute break!"

"Eh?... Manager, what about you?"

Levi laughed, looking at the newly hired graduate before him. "As a manager, don't you know that my working hours differed from yours? Come on, kid. Get out of here. Go... Go... Eat."

Levi smiled, focusing on the task before him.

This has been the ordinary life of a Baymardian Warehouse Manager.

The adventure ever ends.

Chapter 1426 A Special Guest

Din. Din. Din. Din~

The sudden footsteps grew louder and louder the closer they approached the room.

Landon peeled his eyes off the book he was reading, looking at his approaching wife.

"Oh, my ancestors! Why aren't you heading for the showers yet? Don't you know they could be here any moment from now?"

Lucy's hair and bathrobe robe were damp, showing that she was done taking her bath.

Their room was massive, and their bathroom was even grander, just as a Royal bathroom should look.

And one shouldn't forget that they also had their private walk-in closets and several power rooms for things like makeup, lotion, perfume, and whatnot.

It can be said that since they had the most prominent and grandest wing, the interior of the wing was too astonishing.

Other wings had 2~3 floors of room in them.

But theirs had 4 and a half.

The half part was more or less the tippy-top tower region connected to their wing.

And as it stood now, that top floor, as well as the entire 4th floor, was just one big bedroom for themselves.

In other words, these 2 floors also had separate stairways and a single open elevator in the space.

One couldn't even begin to fathom just how big their wing was.

As for the 1st to 3rd floor, the rooms were also excellent, though less grand than theirs.

For sure, their future children would stay in these rooms.

At present, there are just 7 spare rooms in the wing.

Without a care in the world, Lucy began flying about vigorously, rushing to the massive powder room that contained shelves and shoes of lotion, perfume, oils, and so on.

But as she darted around like a crazy person, giving Landon the scary eyes that said: If you don't get up now, then just wait and see what I will do to you!

(Q_Q)

Alas...

He was Monarch, a ruler respected by all. Yet, he was now being threatened like this all because of someone's fiancé!

Though he hated to admit it, he was indeed jealous.

He knew he was jealous for nothing. But whose fault was that?

For a while now, Lucy had been preparing for this day as though it was Goddess herself who would descend upon this world.

He even felt that she had never done so much in his case.

Now, he was even more curious to see this strange guest of his.

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Closing his book, putting it aside, stepping out of his bed, and raising his hands in surrender, Landon retreated away under his wife's fierce look.

"Alright. Alright, my darling Lulu... I'm up. Come now, you wouldn't be thinking of murdering your husband so soon, right?"

Lucy rolled her eyes heavenwards. "It's good that you know I can still murder you."

"Now, now... Calm down, Lulu. It's treason to attempt murder on this king."

"What did you say?!"

"Nothing. Nothing, my darling wife..."

'So fierce...' Landon murmured, hastily heading for the bathrobe corridor.

It was the size of a small room. And was the separation between his actual bedroom and the bathroom.

But while cleaning himself up, Landon couldn't help grumbling in his heart.

'Damn guest!'

Because of their expectant arrival, Lucy hasn't even had the time to get intimate with him at night.

For 5 whole days, he had been starved dry!

Sure. He could probably go longer without.

But sleeping beside the woman he loved and found to be the most beautiful in this world, how could his body not react?

Peep!

Landon pressed the buttons on the walls. And instantly, the shower he was under turned off.

Right now, he was standing in a forest-like shower-site with 30~35 shower heads positioned in different regions on the ceiling.

And at various intervals, there were also slats for people to lie or sit on while the many showers did their thing.

And from the controls, he could turn on any single one of these showerheads, a combination of some or even all at once.

Again, the shower heads were far bigger and broader than the standard one, giving a person the illusion of being under a waterfall.

The relaxing lights were very meditative.

And all this was just the shower region.

Please! He had a vast bathhouse equipped with various stations.

Even Julius Caesar would be jealous to death!

His bathroom was a combination of modern and medical blended together perfectly.

And this was just for him and Lucy.

5, 10, 48 minutes later, Landon had long gotten out of the shower and was now fully dressed and seated back on his bed, picking up the original book he was reading.

As for his wife who was rushing him to death, where was she now?

Oh yes... She was still getting ready!

Hair, makeup, accessories... The maids did their best to assist her in her separate walk-in closet.

The closet space was indeed similar to a clothing store.

It had its one lounge, changing site, and even a few snacks out on display too.

And another 42 minutes more, Lucy was finally done.

She stepped into the bedroom, feeling choked and embarrassed seeing Landon long dressed.

Landon chuckled.

"Wife, you look beautiful."

Just like that, she forgot her embarrassment, feeling shy.

"Really? You like it?"

"Hmmm... It brings out your eyes." Landon chuckled.

Who made him love her. He kissed her forehead, making her blush.

"Well, hubby... You... You also look dashing... very breathtaking too."

The duo complimented themselves, stepping out of their room hand in hand.

With them being ready, Lucy was no longer anxious.

Earlier, she was afraid they'd be late.

But as luck would have it, they even had a mole time to extend their breakfast while waiting for their guests to arrive.

And just who were they waiting for?

Heh... It was none other than the newly crowned Monarch of Terique and his little chef fiance.

As to why they had come?

It was simple!

The Culinary and Bartending Entrance Examination was about to begin!

Chapter 1427 Enter: Mildred The Little Chef

Gawk! Gawk! Gawk!

The seagulls were singing excitedly across the harbor, and the spirit of adventure had filled the scene.

"What was that, and what was this?"

"Amazing! How about that pointy building? It's the first time seeing such a structural beauty in the flesh!"

"Wait! Husband, just look at these streets? What sort of time did they use to do this?"

"Ahhh~... Mommy! That thing called a car (forklift) is lifting so many barrels and crates on its own!"

"Wife. Seeing is truly believing. This Baymard truly is a strange world for us village folk."

The rambles of the crowds were high.

And as usual, some pointed at various shocking sites with dumbfounded expressions, while others just smiled, acting as pros since this wasn't their first time coming here.

Heh... Newbies!

The port was busy with people and baggage transport vehicles moving in all directions.

All sorts of people had arrived.

But maybe the largest group of arrivees were those gearing up to take the official exams, managing to enter one of Baymard's public academies.

Their empires sent a majority of them.

Be it law, culinary, weather, arts, or any other open Academies, the number of people coming in was high.

Each year, these academies hosted 2~3 entrance examinations.

Some had failed earlier exams, hoping to pass on this try. While for others, it was also their first time here.

And believe it or not, over the last few years, many people have taken advantage of this matter, actively gathering information to sell to those interested.

Yes!

Smart people in the many memories had begun selling cheat sheets or guidelines they considered as guidelines to the exams.

Some information builds also worked hard in collecting this information too.

And for a good price, they would be more than happy to sell them.

What? You say it's a ripoff?

Then go to the exams without a cheat!

Hmph!

They also compiled how the examinations over the years had been, trying to point many in the right direction.

And in truth, their guidelines were all smart and good.

However, those who relied on this wholly would soon realize the error of their ways.

Some failed the last exams, noticing that they focused too much on this 'cheat,' not considering the whole picture.

The Baymardian academies were already very prestigious in the hearts of many.

So what sort of entrance examination would be befitting of its status, if not one that could dive into all unknown factors?

The exams were always random, out of nowhere, and required one to think of all factors pertaining to a matter.

Nonetheless, the answer was always relatively simple, right under their noses!

This was what made many crazy!

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One by one, the many ships arrived from the many parts of the treaty-signed empires.

Some from Romain and some from Pyno.

And on one of those ships were the Teriquen Royal Platoons all here to escort his majesty and her highness, Princess Mildred.

The ship had docked. And as usual, those who stayed at the highest V.I.P cabins would be escorted out first.

Mildred stepped onto the docks, looking around with cute, widened eyes.

Astar was pleased, seeing her happy.

He puffed his chest and toon out the lollipop in his mouth proudly.

"You see! I told you my older brother's territory is powerful!"

As if talking about himself, Astar was so proud that one would think he was Landon himself.

"Amazing!" Mildred clapped ecstatically,

Yes! This was her idols' territory!

Just look at how good it looks?

Landon, the genius and creator behind the many delicious goods she had been eating, was undoubtedly her idol!

(*?*)

Very quickly, she shook Astar. "No! No! No! I must be prepared!... How long before we reach the palace?"

Erm...

Astar scratched his head in confusion.

He never recalled or noticed how long the journey was.

But wait... He remembered now.

"It's 10 bags of hot flaming Doritos away! That's how far it is!"

"Really? What about drinks?" Did he factor this in too?

"Oh yeah... 5 small cans of sprite or fruitopia is my usual choice. Blah, blah, blah, blah~."

[The guards]: (-_-)

The guards almost fell to their knees listening to these 2 foodies calculate time based on what they are.

'Your majesty, don't you know that your eating is abnormal? More than that, who can eat 10 big bags of hot spicy Doritos all at once? And on top of that, you still drank 5 cans of drinks too? What sort of belly do you have? If you want to know how long, then why don't you just ask?'

Sigh...

The guards resigned themselves to their fates, following Astar and Mildred past Coastal Port security.

And soon, they were sent off to the palace.

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Vmmmm~

Landon and Lucy stared at the incoming stream of vehicles.

At the moment, everyone else, including children, were busy.

Thus, they were the only ones here to welcome this entourage, as well as a few Baymardian representatives.

How could these 2 empires miss a chance to speed up some underlying businesses and get things done?

The crafty government officials from both Baymard and Terique were all but ready to get to work!

Of course over the years, many become friends with each other

So it was more or less like a friendship reunion.

Bubuum. Bubuum.

Mildred stepped out of the vehicle, feeling her heart pounding too loudly.

Her idol was standing right before her!

Luckily, she knew sister Lucy.

"Ahh~... My baby Mildred. You're finally here!"

If Lucy had wings, she would've flapped towards Mildred in a heartbeat.

The first time she and the girls met her in Terique, all of them fell in love with this little chef.

She was just too cute, with very clean eyes, having no ulterior motives.

The only time her eyes would change was when food was involved.

What's more, she was so cute, being a little squishy Loli.

Ahhh~...

She just wanted to hug her to death!

(>v

Chapter 1428 Heaven's Gates

Everything seemed well and peachy. But in another corner of Baymard, 2 men checked in with the little bag they carried.

"Remember, why we are here..." One of them said."

"Hmmm..."

The other hummed.

These next 3 days were going to be the most difficult of them all!

The duo looked at each other tactfully, continuing their tourist act.

Who were they? And what did they truly want?

No one knew.

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Tick-Tock. Tick-Tock.

The little feast for the guests and representatives was finally over.

And as expected, Astar was taken to the room he always used whenever he came over.

Well, it was on the highest and most luxurious floor in one of the Guest Buildings.

And of course, though Mildred was his fiance, they were yet to be married.

Thus, she stayed in a separate room with 2 of her maids.

"Waw~... Princess, it's really beautiful here! Look! You have 2 bathrooms!"

"Yes! There's also a guest room and a master bedroom too! Princess, we'll sleep in the other bedroom. After all, there are also 2 beds in that room."

Jumping about the ace, Mildred and her maids felt like adventurers in a new world. This was their first time coming to Baynard.

So how can they not get excited?

Of course on the Cruise ship, they also had a spacious Suite that was a 2-floored family-sized suite with a balcony and whatnot.

There, they saw what a shower looked like, as well as mini-fridges.

So yes... They more or less understood how to use the few various fixtures and items in their current room.

But, the design of the place was amazing and different from the one aboard the ships, in turn giving it another feel.

The lights were what she saw on some pictures as Chandeliers, and the entire scene was very classic and just too lavish.

Looking around, they all felt very blessed to be here.

And though fixtures like air conditioners and phones were common between this place and the one they stayed in aboard the ship, they had to admit that some fixtures were either upgrades to the ones they saw or completely new altogether.

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Mildred stood before the massive doubled-sided force, opening it up in awe.

~La~~~

A nonexistent music played in her head.

Very big!

This was the highest fridge she had ever seen.

"Eh? Press here to release ice?... Really?"

Very quickly, she reached for a glass and pressed it excitedly.

Chang~

Success!

Let's see, fridge, freezer...

Ah!... There were several soft drinks and juice already in there.

Mildred's body trembled... Was this love?

She higher the derive, almost not letting go.

"Princess, you need to calm down." The maids said, trying to pry her away from the fridge.

"Yes, princess... Look! On the counter, there are several gift baskets with a bold note from the queen."

Ah- sister Lucy left her things?

Rip!

Mildred wasted no time opening them.

Of course before she did, she could already get the smell penetrating her nostrils.

Her favorite snacks! And any new ones too!

It looks like Baymard had created several more yet again.

Tsk... As expected of her Idol's empire.

"Quick. Help me out this over there, there, there, and there!"

"Ah-... Cake! Straight to the fridge!"

Like so, Mildred's entire focus was on organizing her snacks by the bar in the room.

Thinking of her fridge, it looks like they would have to go shopping to fill it up.

Instantly, here yes were thinking like stars.

She heard that the markets here were called superstores and were a dream for many food buyers.

Great! This was definitely a must-visit location on her tourist checklist.

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That's right.

Others want to go indoor snowboarding, go to the zoo, race on a go-kart, or even swim with the fish.

But to her, the grocery stores were the first things on her list!

Swim with the fishes? Heh... Shouldn't they be worried that she would eat them instead?

The maids glanced at each other tactfully.

"Princess, you only have a certain weekly budget and can never go over that. If you finish it, you'll be a poor princess over here."

They warned.

Believe it or not, their princess was good with money in other departments.

If you told her to restock her wardrobe, that money would probably never be used for that.

Maybe she might heh 1 or 2 items in the end.

But where her money spending went was on food and beverages.

She wanted to eat it all. But for some reason, like his majesty, she seems to have the ability of not getting fat.

Many had a headache when pairing them together.

These 2 won't eat the nation's budget because of food, right?

Luckily for Asar, his only existing siblings loved him to death.

As one can recall, Micheal's ex and dead wife, Nopline's sister, had successfully wiped out his other wives and children, leaving only Aster's mother and Raul's mother.

Raul was rescued when Landon rescued Micheal, taking him to Baynard.

And during that time, Raul studied and worked in a government position focused on Agriculture.

And just several months before Astar's coronation, Raul officially went back to Terique, planning to assist Astar in running the empire.

His primary focus was on agriculture, increasing yield, and ensuring that the ordinary peasants never go hungry.

He also had to deal with the Tumbleweed issues that reduced crop yields.

In short, Astar had a capable team around him, not just from his family but from the ministers and many others.

And, they put Astar on an eating buffet just like his Princess.

It was funny because after watching One Piece, many felt that Lucy was made and referenced from Astar.

How can such a person lead the powerful Zoro, Sanji, and the rest with that nature?

If you say it's impossible, then what about their situation in Terique?

With all honesty, they truly wanted him to be monarch, not minding his straightforwardness.

The guy was just like Lucy. He would dive into a fight without even thinking.

Sigh...

What else could they do but watch his back?

It was really true what they said. Simpletons had their sort of luck.

All many could do now was pray that the child birthed by these 2 would have a brain.

Their expectations were low but hopeful.

Mildred munched on her snacks, feeling very pleased with her current situation.

But soon, she realized her current predicament.

"Ah... I have to make sure that I sleep early."

Tomorrow, the entrance examination begins!

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Zzzzzz~~

The light was filled with snores, as many slept with books and papers on their faces. Some slept in the kitchens, others amidst several unopened beverages, and some slept on the floor with their backs touching the walls.

No way. Who made them study well into the night?

For fear that they wouldn't be able to get out or snooze their alarms, they dared not sleep in comfy beds.

The night went by in a blink of an eye.

And before many knew it, their alarms buzzed and rang crazily.

~Ring!!!!~

'Wake up! Wake up!... I said wake your damn ass up!'

Like lightning, many were up to their feet even though they wished nothing more than to get several moments of sleep.

Pah.

They slapped their jaws, throwing them into the shower, before finally having a quick meal at an unbelievable pace.

For some of them who were on the path to becoming culinary gods, how can they not know the importance of having a well-rounded meal before entering such a daunting battlefield?

The exams were long, with a few breaks in between.

But that didn't mean they should start this battle on an empty stomach.

Going on an empty stomach would not only make one have less energy but would keep them distracted thinking of nothing else but eating at some point.

And when one's mind was focused on such matters, they would try to rush everything else... Especially in such long exams.

"Quick? Pass me my apron!"

"Dammit! Where are my pens? I put them in my bag last night! They are my lucky pens! With this, I will pass the Bar exam into Law school!"

"F***! I forgot my XG-Paint brush models! Oh no! What should I do now?"

"Hurry! Hurry! The bus will be here any moment from now!"

(Q^Q)

...

Din. Din. Din. Din. Din.~

The footsteps of many could be heard running across the streets and various sites, all heading for these locations.

It should be noted that for the public academies, they had their Entrance Examinations all on the same day!

So the rush was real, with people spreading towards many locations within District C.

They had come from the many empires in Romain and Pyno, anxiously heading to the examination sites.

Some princes, princesses, nobles and even famous chefs, government officials and many others were here.

Bubuum. Bubuum.

Their hearts drummed too loudly against their chests.

For some, their empires had sent them over. And for others, they came to better their skills and improve their businesses.

And standing before the incredible academy gates, it looked like they were before the doors leading into the heavens!

Knowledge, all the mysteries they had long been curious about were all behind these gates!

Suddenly, the golden gates opened.

"You may enter."

Chapter 1429 The Examination Begins!

The massive golden gates were open.

And with the heavenly words spoken, many took deep breaths, lifted their chests, and marched in.

Din. Din. Din. Din.

Their footsteps reflected their emotions.

Some were hesitant, some nervous, others confident, while quite a few were just relaxed.

And soon after entering the academy ground, they seemed to come to a fork on the main road a little further from the massive fountain.

[All Culinary examinees will head to the left, while those for Bartending... head to the right!]

The voice again resounded, making the massive inflow of people break apart.

Make no mistake!

The golden fenced academy was incredibly large, with numerous student residential buildings, each having their designated farming sites too.

The place was beyond huge, having its own streets, car parks, Battle Arena, etc.

And as the group divided, Mildred found herself going left.

Up the hilly terrain, she and the many contestants went.

Right from the gates, they were given contestant number badges.

This was why they arrived way earlier than the actual exam time.

They not only registered their names but also did multiple rounds of security checks.

It can be said that the academy was more or less on several vast hills.

And to reach the main gates, one has to drive or walk upwards within the private drive lane.

However, it should be noted that the main Golden Gate was the 2nd and final gate to enter the academy because just before one stepped onto the long-winded drive lane, they would first pass through another gate and several security protocols within the private widened drive lane.

Thus, everyone had been checked, registered, and even had the opportunity to put their bags away in the Public locker-room within the security entry buildings.

Now, they were marching in with their bartending/chef attire on hand, as well their trusty favorite or ancestral blades at hand.

No one wore their aprons yet since they didn't want to get it dirty.

Marks could get taken away for appearing at the start of the examination like that.

And though the academy would provide knives, chopping boards, and everything else they would use, many still came with their favorite blades.

It was the prestige of a chef.

The only rule for carrying kitchen blades was that unless when in use, one must have it tucked away in a wooden holding or iron dagger sheath of some sort.

Anyone caught marching with an open blade in their hands would be sanctioned the way they saw best!

Gulp.

With the warning loud and clear, no one dared to do so. Similarly, everyone subconsciously held or placed their blade sheath at their front, making sure that no one with ill intentions would pull it out and frame them or do any other devious acts just to see them away.

The exam was stiff. And some real-life competitors from opposing restaurants, inns, and taverns were here.

Provided they stopped their competitors from bringing glory to their hometowns or cities, wasn't this still great for them?

In this moment of truth, countless bad thoughts continuously swirled and bombarded many people's minds.

But for whether they would dare to pull such acts, only they knew the answer to that.

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"Hey... Take a look at candidate 526. If I'm not mistaken, that should be Chef Basol from the massive 2-star Restaurant in Deiferus!"

"What? A 2-star restaurant?.... Why... That's the highest restaurant star out of Baymard!"

"Exactly! And Basol is also a very famous chef there!"

"Check it out. There's the uprising Chef Polina, one of the few female chefs to spring up in Zalipnia. It's said that she has a magic touch, making food turn as rich as gold when entering your mouth!"

"Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah~~..."

The ramblings of the contestants only served in highlighting the forecast examinees amongst them.

And already, many felt their self-confidence lower even more.

Would they be able to get in after so many professional chefs around?

If they aren't able to impress the examiners with the talents they had?

Din. Din. Din. Din. Din~

The further they traversed, the thicker the air around them.

Fear and doubt had only made their muscles clenched even more.

For some, their entire families depended on passing this one examination.

Mildred's ears seemed to be in an isolation chamber because all that she heard didn't phase her at all.

Others were secretly looking at the strong examinees amongst them. But she had long been focused on something else entirely.

Sniff. Sniff~

Tomatoes, ginger, greens...

Her nose has always had a heightened sense. And already, she could smell the faint aromas of these ingredients.

It was so faint that she hardly picked anything up.

Maybe the smell was coming from the many academy farms belonging to the students. But she had a hunch that the smells would have something to do with the exam.

Tomatoes... Did this have something to do with the exams?

And more importantly, when can she take a bite of it?

Grrr~...

She was already hungry, even though it wasn't long that she ate.

.

Mildred rubbed her belly while imagining the delicious taste of food in her mouth when suddenly, someone bumped into her.

"Ah!... I'm sorry... I... I didn't mean it. The smell just caught me off guard."

A timid girl with the cutest freckles and 2 pigtails continuously apologized to her.

Mildred opened her eyes in shock. "You can smell it too?"

The girl nodded vigorously.

She had thought she was hallucinating or imagining things. But hearing Mildred's questions, she knew what she smelt was real.

"I'm... I'm... Okaru."

The girl said, blushing shyly.

And the moment introduced herself, the duo walked alongside each other, making their way towards the examination site.

Okaru bit her lips very nervously. "What if we don't make it? This is the first exam out of the week. If we don't make it through today, we won't qualify for tomorrow's exam. So aren't you afraid? What if the other examinees are too strong, giving us a bad review in the eyes of the examiners?"

Mildred shrugged her shoulders. "We are all just as talented as the rest. So just do your best for yourself... And everything will be fine... Cook for the customer and not yourself."

Cook for the customer?

... The words resounded in Okaru's ears again and again.

Yes!

Although this was an examination, their test was still to please the customers!

Chapter 1430 A Fierce Start

One by one, the crowd finally arrived within an open hillside.

Wow.

So beautiful!

The neatly trimmed green field, the many open farming beds at the perimeters, and an open pond at the center of the space.

Wait... Were they to pick and choose their own ingredients from the lot?

Bubuum.

Heartbeats rising, sweat forming on their palms, many stepped towards the many rows and columns of tables lined up in the open.

No doubt about it, these tables would be their preparation sites.

And by the side of every table was a small portable outdoor gas tank connected to a gas stove with 2 spots for cooking.

This meant that each examinee could cook at most 2 things at a time.

How they used up their time would be up to them.

Some people might decide to start with the ingredients that took the longest to make, while others might choose to start with those that took the shortest.

And strategically positioned at the perimeters of the site were massive ovens to be used by everyone.

They also quickly noticed that each table had a chopping board, several knives, spoons, pots, preparation bowls, serving dishes, and serving trays.

[Everyone, take your positions according to your numbers.]

And at the very front was a podium with numerous teachers seated calmly while others stood on the sides instead.

But apart from the teachers and examiners, there were also quite a few security guards and famous certified Baymardian chefs, and important personnel in the food industry who came as guests.

"Wow! His majesty Landon and his majesty Astar are here!"

Someone exclaimed. And immediately, everyone felt their bodies burn with uncontrollable excitement.

And Mildred wasn't exempted from this feeling.

Her idol... Her idol was here!

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Examinee 378.

That was her number.

Look left, look right, she noticed that 372~377 had no tables here.

...so does this mean that they were to the right, heading to the bartending exam?

But even with many missing, Mildred could roughly guess that there should be at least 800 of them here.

And from what she was told, the moment the exam began, the elimination would also begin.

It's said that before the taste-testing period came, as many as 1/10th of them might've already failed.

And after taste-testing, some would still end up failing as well.

And this was all within the first day of their exams.

Just as she expected, the hundreds of examiners were already moving about the scene.

Some had already been disqualified for not even bothering to bring an apron.

"Disqualified!"

"No... No... Please, give me one more chance."

"Disqualified!"

"Why? Why am I disqualified over such a flimsy reason while they aren't?"

"Disqualified!"

"How can I be disqualified? Impossible! I'm one of the best cooks in my town!"

"Go home! You're out!"

Brutal.

Many secretly sweated buckets, listening to the examiners disqualify a few around them.

Lying trough, why the savagery?

Already, their 800 had dropped down quite a bit.

Okaru trembled and released a sigh of relief, seeing the examiner pass her without any issues.

Her entire body was shaking to the core.

"Mildred, they are really tough, aren't they."

Mildred nodded, agreeing with Okaru.

This was her first time in such an exam.

And even if she was calm and confident, the shocks and the seriousness were enough to make her tale this very serious.

She dared to say that she had never felt so on edge before.

Mildred looked at Landon in the far distance above the Podium.

'As expected of an academy opened by my Idol.'

Clenching her blade, Mildred swore to create the best dish she had ever made in her life!

She had a deal with Astar.

If she doesn't pass the exam, she would go back to Terique and begin her Queen training which was like hell.

When she thought of all the horror she had faced during that time, she had no idea how Astar could sit through his Monarch training when he was younger.

She knew that eventually, she would begin her Queen training. But what she geared was that by the time she officially began, she wouldn't have time to further her dream as a chef.

That's why she wanted to do this first!

It was also fated that Okaru just happened to be by the table beside her.

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"Examinees! Today, you'll begin your first exam. You are to create any dish of your choice, focused around any theme, with the main ingredient being Tomatoes." The host said with a playful look in his eyes.

"Look all around you!... There are ingredients everywhere. And on the public tables, there are also some ingredients like rice, flour, salt, and others... The choice is yours."

Already, many thought of what they would pair their dishes with.

Rice?... Flour?... There wasn't a mention of pasta or noodles. So should they want this, they would have to make it from the flour available.

Oil and all the rest were there too.

Suddenly, the atmosphere was even more energetic.

And once again, the host's voice rang out.

"You have 5 hours on the clock! Those who if she earlier can also get early evaluations and leave early. Now, begin!"

Like an order from the heavens, many rushed to grab their ingredients.

"Okaru, do you have what dishes you want to make in mind?"

Okaru shook her head in confusion. "Not... Not yet."

"Then think fast. Look all around you. Apart from tomatoes that seem excessive, the farm beds and even the pond has limited ingredients. Once they are all picked out, those who failed to secure them will be forced to cook with what other scarce ingredients they find!"

What?!

Okaru's eyes opened in horror.

Limited?

Then... Then didn't this mean they might end up with little to no, or ones that are badly damaged or poor in quality?

"You understand this, don't you. No matter how good one's cooking ability is, bad quality ingredients will always leave defects in the dishes."

Mildred's words smacked Okaru in the face.

And gritting her teeth, she dropped her blade and held Mildred firmly.

Blame her for thinking stupidly.

"Let's go! We have to get the freshest tomatoes... And fish! Yes! Fish! We have to catch the fish!"

What the hell were they waiting for?

Like lightning, everyone developed ninja tactics.

The examiners, invigilators, guests, and everyone stared at the chaotic scenes with smiles on their faces

The exam had officially begun!